

CHESTER TIMES – May 19, 1887 – A FINE POULTRY YARD – Where Roosters, Ducks and Hens Flourish Like Green Bay Trees

Sam Lever is the village blacksmith at Garrettford and he was playing a part in the anvil chorus yesterday when a *Times* reporter interrupted him to ask the way to the Garrettford Poultry Yards.

“Oh, I am yer man,” said Sam, as he gave two or three more whacks to the heated iron. “Just go down this road till you come to a small lane on your right; turn down that lane and you will soon be at the Garrettford Poultry Yards. If Mr. Reese is at home, he will show you all and tell you all you want to know.”

Passing three or four comfortable looking farm houses, with surroundings that looked attractive in the morning sunshine, the *Times* man soon arrived at the lane aforesaid and immediately afterward hove in sight of the place where chickens, ducks and geese are brought into being by artificial means.

The Garrettford Poultry Yards are owned by W. K. Reese and are located about half a mile from the village of Garrettford, on the Garrettford Road.

Mr. Reese established the poultry business here two years ago and has been very successful. His stock of laying fowls numbers upwards of a thousand and includes five or six of the most important breeds. He has a pen of very fine imported Red-caps, the greatest layers known, and whose eggs sell readily at six dollars for a setting of fifteen.

In the pens, which are arranged in the most convenient and modern style, are Wyandottes, Plymouth Rocks, Light Brahmas, Langshans, and Pekin ducks and Bronze turkeys. Some of these are first premium fowls and cannot be excelled anywhere. At the State Fair last fall Mr. Reese was awarded the first premium for Pekin ducks and for the best pen of Wyandottes. Although in the business but a short time, he has gained quite a reputation and the supply of eggs at this season, when all the hens are doing their best, is hardly sufficient to supply the demand.

In hatching out the young chicks Mr. Reese uses the artificial means entirely and the hens are broken up as soon as they show a tendency to want to sit. He had two incubators at work during our visit – the Monarch, containing 600 eggs, and the Perfect Hatcher, with 320. In the latter machine the little chicks were kicking loose from the shell, and blinking their eyes at the light of day in the new world. They all appeared strong, hardy and happy. After they gain a little strength they are removed to the brooder, and grow up to be full-fledged Wyandottes, Plymouth Rocks or some other good breed, according to their start in life.

In reply to the reporter’s query as to whether the artificial hatcher was equal to the natural one, Mr. Reese replied:

“Yes, indeed, it beats the hen all to pieces. By this method there is no loss by breakage. With the Perfect Hatcher I have hatched 89 per cent of the eggs, and every fertile egg in the machine. I regard it as nearly perfect as an incubator can be made.”

Mr. Reese also raises Scotch Colley dogs, and the pen showed a dozen yelping specimens of fine size and good points. The reporter felt thankful that there was a strong wire fence between himself and the canines for they evinced a desire to be on familiar terms if an opportunity was offered.

The farm connected with the Garrettford Poultry Yards contains thirty acres of highly cultured land, and has been in the Reese family for years and descended to the present owner from his grandfather. The place is well adapted for a poultry villa, in fact no better could be found.

From the poultry yards we turned in the direction of the Drexel mansion. How we got there, what we saw and how we got away will form the subject of another article.